

Department of Health & Human Services



**REQUEST FOR APPLICATION
FOR
COMMUNITY SERVICES BLOCK GRANT DISCRETIONARY FUNDS FROM
THE STATE OF NEBRASKA FY2012**

RFA Number and Title: State of Nebraska Community Services Block Grant Discretionary Funds

Date Due: Wednesday, August 24, 2011 by 5:00 p.m. CST

Date of Issuance: Wednesday, July 6, 2011

To Be Opened: Thursday, August 25, 2011

Contact Person: Jennifer Dreibelbis

REQUEST FOR APPLICATION

Sealed proposals, subject to the conditions included in the RFA, will be received until the above listed proposal due date. On Thursday, August 25th, the proposals will be publicly opened and read for furnishing the following described services to the State of Nebraska, Department of Health and Human Services, in accordance with the Request for Application and the specifications and conditions attached hereto.

If the application is missing technical information, the applicant will receive a telephone call followed by a written and/or electronic notification. The applicant will have until Wednesday, August 31, 2011, by 5:00 p.m. CST to submit the needed information. **If applicant does not submit the requested additional information by August 31, 2011 by 5:00 p.m. CST, the applications will not be considered for funding.**

INSTRUCTIONS TO APPLICANT – READ CAREFULLY

FAILURE TO FOLLOW INSTRUCTIONS MAY RESULT IN REJECTED APPLICATION

- All proposals are subject to the Standard Conditions and Terms of Contractual Services as specified in the RFA.
- Review application for completeness. **If applicant does not submit requested information by the deadline(s), the application will not be considered for funding.** (Use and *include* Application Completion Checklist.)
- Applications with narrative sections **exceeding the specified page limit, font-size and margins will not be considered for funding.**
- Faxed applications **will not be accepted.** Electronically submitted applications **will not be accepted.**
- Proposals **must be typewritten and manually signed to be valid.**
- **The principal contact person for all matters pertaining to your grant is Jennifer Dreibelbis. Please contact Ms. Dreibelbis at 402-471-9346 with any questions concerning the RFA or the application.**

SUBMIT PROPOSAL TO: Jennifer Dreibelbis, CSBG Program Specialist
Nebraska Department of Health & Human Services
Division of Children and Family Services
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SPECIFICS

Total Funding Anticipated: \$240,000

Anticipated awards: 3 – 5 awards varying on application amounts

Funding minimum: none

Funding maximum: \$125,000 per application

Award period: October 1, 2011 – September 30, 2012 with a renewal period of October 1, 2012 to September 30, 2013 possible.

Applications due date: August 24, 2011 at 5:00 PM CST (4:00 PM MST)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

The Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) provides States, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, U.S. Territories, and Federal and State-recognized Indian Tribes and tribal organizations, Community Action Agencies, migrant and seasonal farmworkers or other organizations designated by the States, funds to alleviate the causes and conditions of poverty in communities.

The Community Services Block Grant is authorized by the Omnibus Reconciliation Act of 1981, P.L. 97-35, the Community Service Block Grant Act, as amended (... in 1998 by the, "Coates Human Services Reauthorization Act of 1998, P.L. 105-285) provides for formula grants to States and Federal and State-recognized Indian Tribes and tribal organizations.

Currently, CSBG services and activities are provided to over 95% of all U.S. counties through a network of public and private community action agencies. This includes approximately 1,086 Community Action Agencies, several hundred other community-based organizations, and 54 Indian Tribes and Tribal Organizations.

Annual applications are required for the CSBG award. A notice reminding State and Indian Tribes to submit annual applications is sent in July each year. Notice of funds availability is made once the Congress appropriates and the Office of Management and Budget apportions the funds.

The CSBG program provides States and Indian Tribes with funds to lessen poverty in communities. The funds provide a range of services and activities to assist the needs of low-income individuals including the homeless, migrants and the elderly. Grant amounts are determined by a formula based on each State's and Indian Tribe's poverty population. Grantees receiving funds under the CSBG program are required to provide services and activities addressing employment, education, better use of available income, housing, nutrition, emergency services and/or health.

Beneficiaries are low-income individuals that may be unemployed or receiving public assistance, including Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), at-risk youth, custodial and non-custodial parents, residents of public housing, persons with disabilities, persons who are homeless, and individuals transitioning from incarceration into the community. Individuals and families can find out about local service providers at <http://www.acf.dhhs.gov/programs/ocs/csbgs/documents/8c.html>.

Discretionary grants are made to statewide or local organizations, or associations with demonstrated expertise in providing training to individuals and organizations on methods of effectively addressing the needs of low-income families, and communities and

organizations that are officially designated as a Community Action Agency (CAA) or a community action program under section 673(1) of the CSBG Act, as amended by the Human Service Amendments of 1994 (P.L. 103-252), and meets all requirements under section 673 (1) (A) and 676A of the CSBG Act, as amended by the COATES Human Services Reauthorization Act of 1998.

The CSBG Act mandates that States pass through 90% of the funds allocated to the eligible entities. Up to 5% of these funds can be used by States and Tribes for administrative costs as defined by the grantee.

States and Tribes are required to submit annual applications with specified assurances which are mandated in the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) Act. State Offices of Community Services work together with local CSBG service providers primarily to prepare annual State Plans which describe how the State will carry out the assurances. Grantees receive funds under the CSBG which are used to provide services and activities that address the following: employment, education, better use of available income, housing, nutrition, emergency services, and health.

NEBRASKA SPECIFIC

Community Service Block Grant funds exist to end poverty in states. The State of Nebraska maintains five percent (5%) of the state's allotment for Discretionary projects. Starting in October 2011, Discretionary grants will be given out on a competitive basis. Grants will be given for one year with a possible second year of funding based on applicant performance, funding levels and submission of a renewal application in August 2012.

Authority for this project was laid out in the State of Nebraska FY2011 and FY2012 Community Services Block Grant State Plan submitted and approved by OCS in September 2010:

In FY2012 (October 1, 2011), 100% of the Discretionary funds will be available via a competitive grant application. Prospective grantees must adhere to the Assurances set out in the CSBG Act and must address issues pertinent to the Six National Goal Areas. Current FY2011 grantees will be eligible to apply but the dollars are not guaranteed. Community Action Agencies are eligible and encouraged to apply.

By applying for CSBG Discretionary Funds from the State of Nebraska, the agency agrees to work with the CSBG State Office to ensure that it meets the following Programmatic Assurances.

As a part of the annual or biannual application and plan required by subsection 676 of Community Services Block Grant Act, as amended, (42 U.S.C. 9901 et seq.) (The Act), the designee of the Chief Executive of the State hereby agrees to the Assurances in Section 676 of the Act -

Programmatic Assurances

- (1) an assurance that funds made available through the grant or allotment will be used—
 - (A) to support activities that are designed to assist low-income families and individuals, including families and individuals receiving assistance under part A of title IV of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 601 et seq.), homeless families

and individuals, migrant or seasonal farm workers, and elderly low-income individuals and families, and a description of how such activities will enable the families and individuals—

- (i) to remove obstacles and solve problems that block the achievement of self-sufficiency (including self-sufficiency for families and individuals who are attempting to transition off a State program carried out under part A of title IV of the Social Security Act);

- (ii) to secure and retain meaningful employment;

- iii) to attain an adequate education, with particular attention toward improving literacy skills of the low-income families in the communities involved, which may include carrying out family literacy initiatives;

- (iv) to make better use of available income;

- (v) to obtain and maintain adequate housing and a suitable living environment;

- (vi) to obtain emergency assistance through loans, grants, or other means to meet immediate and urgent family and individual needs; and

- (vii) to achieve greater participation in the affairs of the communities involved, including the development of public and private grassroots partnerships with local law enforcement agencies, local housing authorities, private foundations, and other public and private partners to—

- (I) document best practices based on successful grassroots intervention in urban areas, to develop methodologies for widespread replication; and

- (II) strengthen and improve relationships with local law enforcement agencies, which may include participation in activities such as neighborhood or community policing efforts;

(B) to address the needs of youth in low-income communities through youth development programs that support the primary role of the family, give priority to the prevention of youth problems and crime, and promote increased community coordination and collaboration in meeting the needs of youth, and support development and expansion of innovative community-based youth development programs that have demonstrated success in preventing or reducing youth crime, such as—

- (i) programs for the establishment of violence-free zones that would involve youth development and intervention models (such as models involving youth mediation, youth mentoring, life skills training, job creation, and entrepreneurship programs); and

- (ii) after-school child care programs; and

(C) to make more effective use of, and to coordinate with, other programs related to the purposes of this subtitle (including State welfare reform efforts);

(2) a description of how the State intends to use discretionary funds made available from the remainder of the grant or allotment described in section 675C(b) in accordance with

this subtitle, including a description of how the State will support innovative community and neighborhood-based initiatives related to the purposes of this subtitle;

(3) information provided by eligible entities in the State, containing—

(A) a description of the service delivery system, for services provided or coordinated with funds made available through grants made under section 675C(a), targeted to low-income individuals and families in communities within the State;

(B) a description of how linkages will be developed to fill identified gaps in the services, through the provision of information, referrals, case management, and follow-up consultations;

(C) a description of how funds made available through grants made under section 675C(a) will be coordinated with other public and private resources; and

(D) a description of how the local entity will use the funds to support innovative community and neighborhood-based initiatives related to the purposes of this subtitle, which may include fatherhood initiatives and other initiatives with the goal of strengthening families and encouraging effective parenting;

(4) an assurance that eligible entities in the State will provide, on an emergency basis, for the provision of such supplies and services, nutritious foods, and related services, as may be necessary to counteract conditions of starvation and malnutrition among low-income individuals;

(5) an assurance that the State and the eligible entities in the State will coordinate, and establish linkages between, governmental and other social services programs to assure the effective delivery of such services to low-income individuals and to avoid duplication of such services, and a description of how the State and the eligible entities will coordinate the provision of employment and training activities, as defined in section 101 of such Act, in the State and in communities with entities providing activities through statewide and local workforce investment systems under the Workforce Investment Act of 1998;

(6) an assurance that the State will ensure coordination between antipoverty programs in each community in the State, and ensure, where appropriate, that emergency energy crisis intervention programs under title XXVI (relating to low-income home energy assistance) are conducted in such community;

(7) an assurance that the State will permit and cooperate with Federal investigations undertaken in accordance with section 678D;

(8) an assurance that any eligible entity in the State that received funding in the previous fiscal year through a community services block grant made under this subtitle will not have its funding terminated under this subtitle, or reduced below the proportional share of funding the entity received in the previous fiscal year unless, after providing notice and an opportunity for a hearing on the record, the State determines that cause exists for such termination or such reduction, subject to review by the Secretary as provided in section 678C(b);

(9) an assurance that the State and eligible entities in the State will, to the maximum extent possible, coordinate programs with and form partnerships with other organizations

serving low-income residents of the communities and members of the groups served by the State, including religious organizations, charitable groups, and community organizations;

(10) an assurance that the State will require each eligible entity in the State to establish procedures under which a low-income individual, community organization, or religious organization, or representative of low-income individuals that considers its organization, or low-income individuals, to be inadequately represented on the board (or other mechanism) of the eligible entity to petition for adequate representation;

(11) an assurance that the State will secure from each eligible entity in the State, as a condition to receipt of funding by the entity through a community services block grant made under this subtitle for a program, a community action plan (which shall be submitted to the Secretary, at the request of the Secretary, with the State plan) that includes a community-needs assessment for the community served, which may be coordinated with community-needs assessments conducted for other programs;

(12) an assurance that the State and all eligible entities in the State will, not later than fiscal year 2001, participate in the Results Oriented Management and Accountability System, another performance measure system for which the Secretary facilitated development pursuant to section 678E(b), or an alternative system for measuring performance and results that meets the requirements of that section, and a description of outcome measures to be used to measure eligible entity performance in promoting self-sufficiency, family stability, and community revitalization; and

(13) information describing how the State will carry out the assurances[676(b)(13)] (This is the Narrative CSBG State Plan available through the State of Nebraska CSBG office upon request).

INTENT

It is DHHS's intent to award funds through a competitive RFA process. Efforts will be made to support statewide activities and to ensure representation across the state based on application scores. The intent of this grant is to complement the work being done by community action agencies to alleviate poverty for Nebraska citizens. Funding will supplement community action agency and other agency projects targeting low income individuals and helping them achieve self sufficiency. This funding is not meant to fully fund a project and agencies are encouraged to seek out other sources of funding and collaborate and coordinate projects with other service providers.

SERVICES DESCRIPTION

CSBG funding is flexible to allow agencies to address the unique challenges and struggles low income individuals face in their community. Funding can be used for any project that supports one or more of the following goals:

Goal 1: Low-income people become more self-sufficient

Goal 2: The conditions in which low-income people live are improved

Goal 3: Low-income people own a stake in their community

Goal 4: Partnerships among supporters and providers of services to low-income people are achieved

***Goal 5:** Agencies increase their capacity to achieve results*

Goal 6: Low-income people, especially vulnerable populations, achieve their potential by strengthening family and other supportive systems.

***Goal 5** is only applicable to Community Action Agencies that apply for funding.*

Must address **one or more** of these priorities:

The priorities listed allow applicants to address local needs. Definitions are not provided however examples are listed of projects that would qualify. This is not a complete list of activities supported by CSBG funds. Some projects may address more than one area listed below. Many of these will require partnership with existing projects. The Project Funding Request and Statement of Needs in the Application should clearly define how the applicant plans to address these focus areas.

Employment: job training, career development for clients, reentry programs, job shadowing programs for youth

Education: GED classes, parenting classes, college or vocational prep for youth, vocational training for displaced workers

Better use of available income: Individual or asset development accounts, financial literacy classes, working with banks to increase banked population,

Housing: non-construction rehabilitation, Rent Wise training, home buyer education classes

Nutrition: supportive activities for emergency food providers, healthy eating for families and youth, support of summer food programs or school based food programs

Emergency services: rental payments, food vouchers, utility payments, disaster assistance, emergency shelter for domestic violence or displaced individuals

Health: youth programs w/Head Start programs, Elderly care packages, youth programs targeting health careers

Examples of projects and how they support these priorities include, but are not limited to:

A. An organization, in partnership with the city government and a local afterschool program, works to include a child's climbing wall and learning center as part of larger local park, to provide additional exercise and options for children (Priority: Coordination of CSBG-funded activities; health issues of children);

B. A Community Action Program works with the county in the provision and support of a housing rehabilitation program, leveraging HOME funds, county funds, PHFA funding etc. (Priority: Coordination/leveraging of CSBG-funded activities; provision of supportive services in housing);

C. An organization will develop and provide a "Starting Your Own Business" program taught entirely in Spanish (Priority: job creation; employment related services);

D. Based on the premise that housing is the foundation for the most effective and compassionate treatment, management, and prevention of HIV/AIDS, a project provides housing and supportive services for the homeless, or those at risk of becoming homeless, living with AIDS. Residents are provided this information in anticipation of transitioning to independent living and self sufficiency (Priority: Coordination of CSBG-funded activities, provision of supportive services).

Funding Restrictions:

Costs of organized fundraising, including financial campaigns, endowment drives, solicitation of gifts and bequests, and similar expenses incurred solely to raise capital or obtain contributions, are considered unallowable costs under grant awarded under this announcement.

Grant awards will not allow reimbursement of pre-award costs

Construction is not an allowable activity or expenditure under this grant award.

Purchase of real property is not an allowable activity or expenditure under this grant award.

TARGET SERVICE AREAS

The targeted service area is primarily statewide. Applications will be considered that cover regions. Applications must provide services to one or more counties in Nebraska to be considered for funding. DHHS strongly encourages statewide projects.

TARGET POPULATION

CSBG Funds shall be used to address needs of low income individuals in the State of Nebraska. Low income is defined as persons making less than 125% of the current federal poverty level as defined by the CSBG Act. Low income individuals include youth, elderly, families and any combination as long as they are within the guidelines. Poverty guidelines can be found at: <http://aspe.hhs.gov/poverty/11poverty.shtml>

ELIGIBILITY**Eligible Applicants:**

Any non profit with 501(c)3 status including community based, neighborhood based, and faith based non profits are eligible to apply;

- Must serve more than one county, preferably a regional area and ideally a statewide presence;
- Must provide direct client services or provide significant support to direct client service providers.

Applicant Eligibility

To be eligible to apply for funding through the Community Services Block Grant Discretionary Grants program, applicants must meet all of the following criteria:

- A. Applicant must be a private, nonprofit organization exempt from taxation under section 501(c)3 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended;
- B. Applicant cannot discriminate based on age, religion, sex, color, disability or national origin;
- C. Applicant must operate a certified drug free workplace;
- D. Applicants must agree to participate in Results Oriented Management and Accountability (ROMA) to track outcomes using the National Performance Indicators. These reports will be due twice a year;
- E. Applicants must conduct and submit the organization's annual, certified, external audit for the year immediately preceding the application to be eligible for CSBG funding.

APPLICATION COMPONENTS

1. Abstract- limit 1 page (5 points)
2. Statement of Need limit 3 pages (20 points)
3. Project Narrative – limit 10 pages ((40 points)
 - a. Project goals and measures
 - b. Collaboration
 - c. Sustainability
4. Workplan – limit 5 pages (5 points)
 - a. Include ROMA indicators
5. Project Budget – limit 3 pages (10 points total for budget information)
6. Project Budget Narrative – limit 4 pages (10 points total for budget information)
7. Measurement and Evaluation - limit 5 pages (20 points)

REVIEW AND EVALUATION PROCESS

The Community Services Block Grant Application Review Team includes representatives from the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services, and other agencies, organizations, and groups that have involvement with low income issues and non profit management. The representatives will score the written proposals and will submit recommendations to the Department of Health and Human Services for final approval. Written proposals will be evaluated on the following factors, assigning a numerical weight with a maximum total of 100 points.

Criteria:

- | | |
|-----------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 5 points | <u>Abstract (1 PAGE MAXIMUM)</u> |
| 20 points | <u>Statement of Need (3 PAGE MAXIMUM)</u>
Please list which of the six national goals your project will address as well as which assurances your project supports. The Statement of Need should include your agencies expertise in providing services to low income clients. Also, include information based on a community needs assessment (cite source) of what the need in your community is and how you plan to address it with your project. |
| 40 points | <u>Project Funding Request (10 PAGE MAXIMUM)</u>
Explain your project in more detail than the Statement of Need and cite resources for the project rationale as well as resources used to complete the project. Describe your project in detail including roles of supported staff, community partners and existing programs within your agency. Explain collaboration and partnership with existing agencies who address the same issues presented in your project. If none, explain why this need has not been met before in your community. Describe linkages in your community to address the issue your project addresses and how you plan to incorporate those linkages. Describe how your project is innovative. If |

using evidence based practices in your project, cite source and explain in more detail. **Applicants will lose one point if the project does not have a statewide focus. Applicants will also lose one point if they are not a community action agency or a community action agency is not a significant partner in activities.**

- 5 points **Workplan (2 PAGE MAXIMUM)**
Please provide your goals, outcomes and activities in the format provided in the application. Include time frames for completion.
- 10 points **Budget Information (7 PAGE MAXIMUM; 3 for Project Budget and 4 for Budget Narrative)**
Budget and audit reflect use of sound fiscal policy. The proposal needs to include the outlined budget completed on the forms provided. Please include a budget narrative showing how budget line items were determined (see instructions). Budget and audit show diversified budget funding sources.
- 20 points **Measurement and Evaluation (5 PAGE MAXIMUM)**
From the workplan provided in the application explain how you will determine the proposed program was successful. How will you measure success and what sources are you using to evaluate success. If using surveys please provide a draft example of the survey.

100 Points

Maximum score possible: **100 Points.**

AWARDS AND AWARD NOTIFICATION

Award of funds is contingent on continued Federal funding. Public notification of awards will be made in October 2011. Prior to public notification, applicants are notified of pending awards. The Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services begins discussion with each prospective grantee about programmatic and fiscal terms of the application in order to reach agreement on final terms. These discussions are limited to budget revisions or clarification on specific application sections. The discussions do not significantly alter the proposal. Grants shall run for a one (1) year term.

In the event the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services fails to reach agreement with the applicant within thirty (30) days from commencement of negotiations, the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services may disqualify any such applicant and proceed to award the contract to the next qualified applicant.

Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services reserves the right to accept or reject any or all proposals received as a result of this request, to negotiate with all qualified sources, or to cancel in part or in its entirety this Request for Application. This Request for Application does not commit the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services to award a contract, to pay costs incurred for the preparation of proposals, or to procure or contract for services.

APPLICATION COMPLETION CHECKLIST

To ensure that your application Community Services Block Grant Discretionary program is complete and will be accepted for review, **please use and include this checklist in your application:**

- ❑ The application **DOES NOT EXCEED THE PAGE MAXIMUMS INDICATED FOR NARRATIVE SECTIONS within the document.**
- ❑ The attached CSBG application is presented on the forms provided or in similar format on the applicant's own application document. All questions are addressed.
- ❑ Budget(s) identify all sources and uses of funds as they relate to the project(s) described in this application.

THE FOLLOWING ITEMS MUST BE INCLUDED:

- ❑ Completed FFATA form (downloaded from State of Nebraska DHHS, CSBG webpage)
- ❑ Organization's articles of incorporation and/or proof of 501 (c) (3) status
- ❑ List of Board of Director's, including their addresses and phone numbers and terms if applicable.
- ❑ Copy of a certified, external financial audit for FY2010.
- ❑ Copy of Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate if asking for Indirect Costs in budget.
- ❑ List of personnel supported through this grant. Use page two (P2) of budget form in application
- ❑ Letters of support (not to exceed three).
- ❑ Drug certification- include your agency level drug free policy. Include citation of where this is found internally, i.e. personnel policies and procedures, bylaws, etc.
- ❑ Please submit **one (1) original** and **six (6) copies** of the **entire application and supporting documentation.**